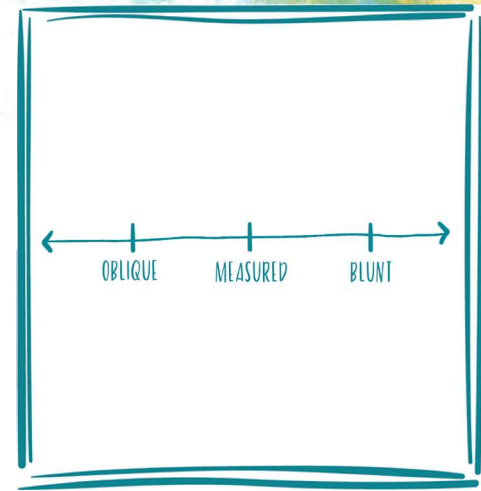# Don't Play "Nice"
Method 2: Go to Extremes

Speaking a truth in harsh tones may make a problem very apparent, but it can also create an environment that feels hostile and lacks a sense of safety. It's like directly pointing at someone-clear, but rude. However, similar to nodding in someone's direction rather than pointing, being too timid or indirect may confuse people or cause them to look right past the problem you're trying to call attention to. It's likely that somewhere in the middle of those two extremes is where you'll want your message to fall if you're hoping for breakthrough on your team.

To call out a truth or deliver a potentially uncomfortable message in a way that supports breakthrough isn't something everyone is naturally skilled at. But practice makes progress, and it's likely that the more you work at finding the right words and the right tone, the better you'll get. Instead of just winging it, it can be easier to get things right after spending some focused time thinking about, and even writing down, the words that could best convey the message in the most appropriate tone.

How to go to extremes:

STEP 1: Identify a truth that needs pointing out or a potentially uncomfortable message that needs delivering.
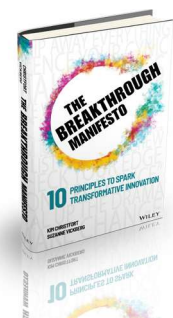
STEP 2: Draw a horizontal line with the labels "Too Weak" on the far left and "Too Blunt" on the far right.

STEP 3: Ask yourself (or the team), "What's the most direct, potentially offensive, way we could communicate this message?" Write the answers on the far right side of the line.

STEP 4: Then ask, "What's the wimpiest way we could communicate this message?" Write the answers on the far left side of the line.

STEP 5: Consider and/or discuss where on the line between these two extremes is appropriate for this situation. Think about how to raise the issue, when to raise it, what method will be used for communicating the message, what environment it will be delivered in, and exactly what to say.

STEP 6: Consider how the Business Chemistry of the message recipient might affect all of the aforementioned (e.g., Drivers like directness and Integrators prefer more diplomacy).method will be used for communicating the message, what environment it will be delivered in, and exactly what to say.

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